(B) Sikkim:

SI. No.	Name of monument	Type of work undertaken
I.	Dubdi Monastery	Structural conservation and horticultural work
2.	Coronation Throne	Structural conservation and horticultural work
3.	Rabdentse site of ancient capital of Sikkim	Structural conservation, horticultural work and tourist facilities

New licensing policy for oil and gas exploration

†*87. SHRI SANJAY
RAUT: SHRI DATTA
MEGHE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(c) whether the production of oil and gas in the oil and gas reserves found in Krishna Godavari basin, Tapti Gas area and Bikaner region of Rajasthan will be started in the year 2008;

(d) if so, the total quantum of oil and gas to be made available from these areas;

(e) whether Government has prepared any new licensing policy for the exploration of oil and gas; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) (a) In Krishna Godavari basin, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) started commercial oil and gas production in October, 1998. In 2006-07, production by ONGC in onland areas of KG basin was about 602 tonnes per day of crude oil and 4 million metric standard cubic metres per day (MMSCMD) of natural gas. In July 2008, additional natural gas of 40 MMSCMD from Krinshna Godavari deepwater areas is likely to be produed by Reliance Industries Limited and NIKO Resources Limited Joint Venture.

In Rajasthan, ONGC and Oil India Limited are producing natural gas at the rate of 0.75 MMSCMD. In second quarter of 2009, crude oil peak production of 6 million metric tonnes per annum is likely to be produced by Cairn Energy India Pvt. Ltd.

12 MMSCMD of natural gas is produced from Tapti field by British Gas Exploration Production India Limited (BGEPIL)

(b) As on 1.4.2007, KG basin, initially in place oil and gas reserves of 970.52 million metric tonnes of oil equivalent (MMTOE) have been established. In Rajasthan, initially in place oil and gas reserves of 310.36 MMTOE have been established. In Tapti field, initially in place oil and gas reserves of 114.96 MMTOE have been established.

†Origi al notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) Government of India approved the New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) in 1997 and it became effective in February, 1999. Since then licenses for exploration are being awarded only through a competitive bidding system and , National Oil Companeis (NOCs) are required to compete on an equal footing with Indian and foreign companies to secure Petroleum Exploration Licenses (PELs). Six rounds of bids have so far been concluded under NELP, in which production sharing contracts for 162 exploration blocks have been signed. Under NELP, 56 oil and gas discoveries in 17 blocks have already been made in Cambay onland, North East Coast and Krishna-Godavari deepwater areas, for which, development plans by the operators are in progress.

With Exploration and development efforts made under NELP, Natural Gas production in the country is likely to be doubled by end of Eleventh Five Year Plan from the present level of gas productin of about 90 million standard cubic metres per day (MMSCMD).

Under seventh round of NELP which was launched on 13th December, 2007, Government is offering 57 exploration blocks. The offered blocks include — 19 deepwater blocks, 9 shallow water blocks and 29 onland blocks. Exploration blocks in onland areas are located in the States of Assam (1), Bihar (3), Chhattisgarh (1), Gujarat (11), Madhya Pradesh (2), Rajasthan (3), Tamil Nadu (2) and West Bengal (6). Out of 19 deepwater blocks, 15 exploration blocks are in western offshore areas and 3 exploration blocks are in eastern offshore areas. One deepwater exploration blocks is in Andaman Nicobar basin. Amongst shallow water blocks, 6 blocks are in Mumbai basin in western offshore, while 3 blocks are in KG basin in eastern offshore.

Amendments to the Income Tax Act, 1961

*88. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minsiter of FINANCE be pleased to state:

whether Government propose to bring out the necessary amendments to Section 10 (17) of the Income TaxAct, 1961 providing exemption of tax on all allowances to Members of Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh at par with the Members of Parliament;

if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

whether any representation in this respect has been received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh; and

if so, what action has been taken thereon by the Central Government?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) Clause (17) of Section 10 of the Income Tax Act exempts from income tax specified allowances received by any person by reason of his membership of Parliament or of any State Legislature. Prior to 1.4.2007, in the case of MPs, the following allowances were exempt under section ,10(17) of the Income Tax Act, 1961:

(0 DailyAllowance;

(ii) Constituency Allowance.

In contrast, in the case of MLAs, the following allowances were exempt:

(0 DailyAllowance;

(ii) All other allowances up to an aggregate limit of Rs. 2000/- p.m.